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Inside Information

United States Department
of Agriculture

Office of Public Affairs

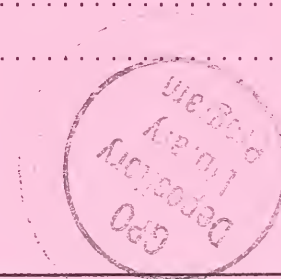
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INSIDE INFORMATION is published for distribution to public affairs and information staff members of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, its agencies, State Departments of Agriculture and Land Grant Universities. Individual items are sent electronically throughout the month to offices on the agricultural information network on the Dialcom Incorporated computer system. These items are then printed at the end of the month for distribution to all offices, including those which do not have access to the Dialcom mail network. Any items, comments or inquiries should be sent to Denver Browning, Editor, Public Liaison, Office of Public Affairs, Room 101A, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, DC 20250, or send to Browning's Dialcom mailbox AGR209, or call at (202) 447-2058. Communicators with USDA agencies, Land-Grant Universities and State Departments of Agriculture are encouraged to submit items to the editor for inclusion in both the electronic and printed versions.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Although timely in the electronic version, some job announcements may reach you too late in hard copy due to the shortness of deadlines. Our policy is to include all electronic items in the end-of-month hard copy.

THIRD EDITION OF DIETARY GUIDELINES FOR AMERICANS RELEASED BY USDA AND DHHS

The third edition of "Nutrition and Your Health: Dietary Guidelines for Americans," was released at a press briefing on November 5, by Secretary of Agriculture Clayton Yeutter and Secretary of Health and Human Services Louis W. Sullivan.

As the federal government's principal statement of nutritional advice, the new guidelines maintain the seven principal messages of the earlier editions (1980 and 1985), while changing the emphasis to reflect the latest scientific information.

The new guidelines detail the following main points: Eat a variety of foods; maintain healthy weight; choose a diet low in fat, saturated fat, and cholesterol; choose a diet with plenty of vegetables, fruit, and grain products; use sugars only in moderation; use salt and sodium only in moderation; and if you drink alcoholic beverages, do so in moderation.

The press briefing was followed by "A Taste Testing Bonanza" in The Patio of USDA's Administration Building, featuring samples from the various food groups prepared in a healthy and tasty manner.

To get a single free copy of the new guidelines, write to: Consumer Information Center, Department 514-X, Pueblo, CO 81009.

UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA COMMUNICATOR OFFERS INSIGHTS INTO COMPUTER TECHNOLOGY

Gary L. Vacin, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, speaking recently at a conference on "Computing in Agriculture and the Life Sciences" sponsored by IBM, said that computers have revolutionized communications, but urged colleagues not to become too dependent on their use.

He said that computers make it possible to access information and to communicate in ways we wouldn't have dreamed of just a few years ago, but stressed the importance of managing the technology and not being managed by it.

Vacin cited a recent article in which syndicated columnist Erma Bombeck said that people are so dependent on computers that they no longer know how to file, compute change, correct address, or use sense. "We can't afford to let that happen to us," Vacin added.

"Despite its tremendous potential, the computer is just a tool to help us deliver information—to communicate—with our audience," he said. "We can't afford to let computers be the tail that wags the dog when it comes to communicating the results of our research and extension programs."

"At the current pace of technological innovation, one year brings changes that could have taken 10 years in the past," Vacin said. "We might find that there is pressure to keep up with the Joneses—a perceived need to adopt technology—just because someone else is doing it."

"Giving in to that pressure may result in gaining a lot of technology, but little else," he said. "We may not know how to use the technology to deliver information and to communicate with our audiences; or worse yet, we may find we have adopted technology our audiences are unable, or unwilling to use."

Vacin, head of the Department of Agricultural Communications, related changes that have occurred since his department began using computers to transmit articles to newspapers in 1978.

"Computers have made us more creative and productive in some ways," he said. "Today we use computers in desktop publishing, generating presentation graphics, transmitting news releases, and in teaching technical writing.

"But computers don't make us better communicators—they allow us to be better if we choose to be," he said. "In our department we've had to sharpen our management skills to enable us to manage the technology, rather than let it manage us. Our communicators have worked hard to continue to fit the medium to the message and not the message to the medium.

"Communications is our first goal, and we've chosen the tools for communication as carefully as we always have, viewing the computer as one more tool now available to us," Vacin said.

"Computerizing a traditional communications department has not been easy. We've had to broaden our skills to learn new processes for achieving old ends. Our roles have changed to include assessing new computer hardware and software and training and consulting with others on how to use computer technology."

For further information, Vacin can be reached at 402-472-3030.

ALABAMA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE HAS AN OPENING FOR A PRODUCER/DIRECTOR

The Alabama Cooperative Extension Service (ACES) at Auburn University has an opening for a producer/director with skills in the planning, writing, producing, directing, editing, and delivery of live, video-taped, and satellite telecommunications.

Duties and responsibilities include conceptualization and development of ACES instructional videos and satellite telecommunications; supervising, developing, coordinating, and producing programs for ACES television/satellite service; acting as liaison with communications and mass media specialists as well as local, regional, and national news personnel to ensure that ACES programming and news items are transmitted in a timely and accurate fashion to state, regional, and national broadcast outlets.

Other duties are coordinating with subject matter specialists and communications specialist to conceptualize programs, develop scripts, and arrange overall video and satellite production schedule; supervising technical support staff regarding all aspects of video and satellite production; developing satellite production schedule with communications specialist, satellite manager, and staff at Auburn U.'s Department of Telecommunications and Educational Television; and, when necessary, act as representative for the communications specialist.

Qualifications include a bachelor's degree in communications, broadcast production, or educational media; five to nine years experience in writing, producing, and on-air work; ability to work in 1/2", 3/4", Betacam-SP, and 1" video formats and be familiar with related video and satellite production equipment. Some science background is preferred. Submission of videotape (VHS) is required.

Interested persons should contact Janice Johnson, Specialist-Personnel, 105 Duncan Hall, Auburn University, AL 36849-5615. Telephone is 205-844-5324.

Closing date is December 31.

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NASW ANNOUNCES WINNERS OF 18TH ANNUAL SCIENCE-IN-SOCIETY JOURNALISM AWARDS

The National Association of Science Writers (NASW) has selected the winners of the 18th Annual Science-in-Society Journalism Awards. Each of the awards—in the newspaper, magazine, and broadcast categories—consists of \$1,000 and a certificate.

And...the winners are:

— Newspapers: Charles Petit, science writer, SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE, for "The Vanishing Rain Forest," a four-part series on the forces competing for control of the enormous Amazonian ecosystem, published on September 25-28, plus a wrap-up that ran in the newspaper's weekend (Oct. 1) magazine.

— Magazines: David Churbuck, associate editor, FORBES, for his November 2, 1989 cover story, "Desktop Forgery," an incisive report on the personal computer as a user-friendly, dream come true for crooks.

— Broadcast: Andy Duncan and Dave King, co-producers of "The Cowboy in Mongolia," a one-hour TV documentary about an Oregon rancher's effort to halt the ecological destruction of the steppes of Inner Mongolia, aired nationally over the Public Broadcast System on October 9, 1989. (See INSIDE INFORMATION, Volume 11, Number 8, August 1989, for related story on PBS airing.) The documentary was produced under the auspices of Oregon State University's (OSU) Agricultural Communications Office.

Duncan (still with OSU) and King (now in the Ag Communications office at Purdue University) were cited for "their unbelievable commitment and dedication to getting this all-but-impossible job done"—a laborious, five-year, nerve-fraying endeavor involving everything from fund-raising to two years of haggling with Chinese officialdom for permission to do the story, to negotiating with censors over just about every shot.

The awards were presented on November 6, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania in conjunction with the 28th annual New Horizons in Science Briefing for science journalists, sponsored by Council for the Advancement of Science Writing.

More than 160 entries were submitted for the 1990 competition. These were narrowed down to 20, which were considered by the final judges: Dennis Flanagan, former editor of SCIENTIFIC JOURNAL; Christine Russell, freelance writer and special health correspondent, THE WASHINGTON POST; and Matt Clark, former medical editor of NEWSWEEK.

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USDA'S FOREIGN AGRICULTURAL SERVICE HAS TELECOMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST OPENING

The Information Systems Management Division of USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) has a job opening for a GS/GM-391-12/13 telecommunications specialist. Announcement No. is FAS-90-57-B.

Duties include a variety of functions in the telecommunications area including research and development, hardware and software evaluation, and operational support to interface with FAS worldwide users.

Other duties are providing data communication expertise in the design, integration, modification, and evaluation of varied and extensive telecommunications including a wide range of communications protocols, transmission methods, and transmission media.

Requirements include one year of work at next lower grade or equivalent, and demonstrated accomplishment of telecommunication project assignments that require a wide range of knowledge of telecommunications requirements and techniques pertinent to the position being filled.

Contact: Pat Lenow, (202-447-4372), USDA, FAS, Personnel Division, Room 5627-S, Washington, DC 20250-1000.

Closing date is December 3.

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NEW BOOK ON FARMLANDS OF AMERICA FEATURES FULL-COLOR AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHS

A new book, "Amber Waves of Grain," is a spectacular and compelling bird's-eye view of the farmlands of America as seen through the lens of one of the world's foremost aerial photographers, Georg Gerster.

In 237 full-color aerial photographs assembled over the course of many years, and covering every state from Maine to Hawaii, Gerster reveals the extraordinary beauty produced by America's farmlands and farmers during different growing seasons and under varying conditions.

Gerster portrays the farmer as an artist who scribes the landscape with plough and harrow, and paints it with the hues of crops and harvests. Under headings such as "The Good Earth," "Problems and Solutions," and "Agriculture and Culture," he reminds us that our bountiful farmlands are indeed earthly, yet far from ordinary.

Gerster shows the challenges facing the American farm where the soil is threatened by erosion, pollution, and salinization. In one instance, annual soil loss was reduced from 150 tons per acre to a tolerable 4 after a farmer saw a Gerster photograph and asked USDA's Soil Conservation Service to contourplough and stripcrop his land.

Gerster's photography is complemented by Joyce Diamanti's sensitive and informative essays, which enhance the images by providing historical, creative, and environmental context. An introduction by Garrison Keillor pays homage to the American farm family's deep commitment to the land.

Published on October 5, the 256-page book (ISBN: 0-06-01646308) is available at a cost of \$50 from Harper-Weldon-Owen, 90 Gold Street, San Francisco, CA 94133.

For further information, contact: David Carriere at 415-291-0100. Fax is 415-291-8841.

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SECRETARY OF USDA'S AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS BOARD IS RETIRING AFTER 33 YEARS

L. Duane Jewell, secretary of the Agricultural Statistics Board, is retiring after 33 years with USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) and its predecessor agencies. He worked in three state offices with Washington, D.C. assignments in between.

He began his career with 8 years in Idaho. After a Washington assignment, he spent 4 years as the deputy state statistician in Arkansas. Following another assignment in Washington, as head of the Livestock Section, he spent 4 years in Colorado as state statistician.

Jewell returned to Washington as chief of the Data Collection Branch and in October of 1984, he became secretary of the Agricultural Statistics Board.

Jewell was featured in the October issue of THE WASHINGTONIAN magazine with a full-page photo and caption describing his being locked up once a month inside USDA offices writing crop prediction reports.

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NEWEST IN SERIES OF SMALL-SCALE AGRICULTURE ALTERNATIVE FACTSHEETS PUBLISHED

"A Small-Scale Agriculture Alternative—Beekeeping," the newest in a series of factsheets, has been published by USDA's Office for Small-Scale Agriculture (OSSA), Cooperative State Research Service (CSRS).

Prepared by H. Shimanuki and S. W. Batra of the Beneficial Insects Laboratory of USDA's Agricultural Research Service, and George Holcomb of USDA's Office of Public Affairs, the new fact sheet discusses the importance of honeybees to U.S. agriculture and consumers.

Others in the series have been "Herbs," "Foliage Plants," "Mushrooms," "Sheep," "Wildflowers," "Specialty Vegetables," "Exotic Livestock," "Dessert Vines," "Exotic Fruits," "Goats," "Woodlots," and "Specialty Flowers."

CSRS plans to publish others, including one in the works on "Aquaculture," and would welcome suggestions for other topics.

The purpose of the factsheets is to help those who want to explore the possibilities of getting into a small-scale agriculture business. The two-sided factsheets emphasize marketing problems and procedures, try to point out pitfalls and ways to aim for success, and give leads on where to look for help.

For further information, contact George Holcomb at 202-447-5746, or Dialcom E-mail AGR204.

Single copies are available at no charge from Howard W. "Bud" Kerr, Jr., Programs Director, OSSA, Cooperative State Research Service, Room 342-D, Aerospace Bldg., USDA, Washington, DC 20250-2200. Telephone is 202-401-4640.

CD-ROM SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP PROVIDES ONGOING FORUM FOR EXCHANGE OF IDEAS

The Special Interest Group on CD-ROM Applications & Technology (SIGCAT) is a user group sponsored by the U.S. Geological Survey which is devoted to the investigation of CD-ROM technology and its myriad applications. The group provides an ongoing forum for exchanging ideas, information, and experiences on CD-ROM.

SIGCAT meetings are held bimonthly at various locations on the east and west coasts, often at the U.S. Geological Survey National Center in Reston, Va. The meetings typically run all day and are open to the general public at no cost. The format usually accommodates six to eight speakers, including live demonstrations of CD-ROM as well as conveying the experiences of those both in and out of government who are actually using the technology in real applications.

The first meeting of SIGCAT took place on Tuesday, May 6, 1986. There are now nearly 4,000 members on the mailing list representing over 300 different government organizations. Individual working groups and committees have been formed under SIGCAT to focus on specific issues involving CD-ROM technology.

At a recent meeting, USDA's Forest Service and others demonstrated CDs they have made. One organization had put the white pages of every telephone directory in the United States on two CDs and showed how they could search every name and produce an alphabetized list in seconds, with addresses and telephone numbers.

Another person demonstrated a CD listing registered voters in Maryland. His firm is making them for each state. A researcher could search for voters in any or all congressional districts, sort them by sex, age, family size, zip code and similar things, and alphabetically organize the names and addresses as mailing labels or with telephone numbers, or in whatever manner the researcher wanted—all in seconds.

For information on joining SIGCAT (there are no membership fees) or any of the Working Groups, send your name, title, organization, phone number, and complete mailing address to: E. J. (Jerry) McFaul, SIGCAT, U.S. Geological Survey, 904 National Center, Reston, VA 22092-9998.

FOOD AND NUTRITION INFORMATION CENTER HAS SOME NEW AND UPDATED PUBLICATIONS

The Food and Nutrition Information Center (FNIC) at the National Agricultural Library has published two new titles in the Quick Bibliography series:

"Childhood Obesity and Cardiovascular Disease January 1985-May 1990," June 1990, 212 citations. Prepared by Natalie Updegrave. (QB-90-59 replaces SRBs 88-05 and 88-06.)

The bibliography lists a variety of materials on the topic of childhood obesity and cardiovascular disease. Included are research articles, teaching materials, and consumer books.

The second is "Nutrition and the Elderly January 1987-May 1990," August 1990, 307 citations. Prepared by Shirley King Evans. (QB 90-78.)

This bibliography lists materials on the subject nutrition and the elderly. Included are professional, educator, and consumer level materials and articles.

FNIC has updated the following Quick Bibliography titles:

"Nutrition Education Printed Materials and Audiovisuals: Grades Preschool to 6, January 1979-May 1990," September 199,327 citations. Prepared by Shirley King Evans. (QB 90-81 updates QB-89-79.)

This bibliography lists print and audiovisuals nutrition educations materials suitable for use with children in grades preschool through grade 6.

"Nutrition Education Printed Materials and Audiovisuals: Grades 7-12, January 1979-May 1990..," September 1990, 203 citations. Prepared by Shirley King Evans. (QB 90-80 updates QB 89-80.)

This bibliography lists print and audiovisual nutrition education materials suitable for use with children in grades 7-12.

FNIC also has published the following title in the Special Reference Brief (SRB) series:

"Pesticide Residues in Food," August 1990. Prepared by Shirley King Evans. (SRB 90-11.)

This SRB lists materials on the topic of pesticide residues in food. The items listed include citations from the AGRICOLA database, general news articles, and selected agencies to contact for further information.

Single copies of these Quick Bibliographies and Special Reference Briefs are available free of charge upon request. Send requests to: FNIC, Room 304, National Agricultural Library, Beltsville, MD 20705.

Advance for Release at 6:30 p.m. EST, Monday Nov. 26 USDA'S 1990 YEARBOOK OF AGRICULTURE IS SCHEDULED FOR RELEASE ON NOVEMBER 27

USDA's 1990 Yearbook of Agriculture, "Americans in Agriculture: Portraits of Diversity," is scheduled for release on November 27.

"The richest resource of American agriculture is its people," said Secretary of Agriculture Clayton Yeutter in the Foreword. "The initiative, creativity, and plain hard work of these millions of people are the key to our efficiency and our ability to compete in the world marketplace."

The 200-page hardback publication, introducing more than 50 interesting people involved in all aspects of agriculture and representing more than 20 million Americans who work in the U.S. food and fiber system, is printed on recycled paper. It also has a different format from previous books—square pages.

The new yearbook is divided into six sections. Part I gives an overview of who works in the U.S. food and fiber sector, and key facts about American farmers, farms, and farmworkers. Part II introduces farmers from dozens of states from New England to the West Coast and from the deep South to the Midwest. Part III goes beyond production agriculture and points out how the business of agriculture employs about 16 million Americans, such as a banker, a wholesaler, and a food technologist.

Part IV relates stories of several working scientists delving into the mysteries of how nature works, and Part V presents a few of the millions of Americans involved in agricultural education. The final section introduces government workers and volunteers supporting agriculture on local, state, and federal levels.

A special focus of the new yearbook is celebrating the centennial of the 1890 Institutions, offering a history and numerous profiles of researchers, farmers, teachers, and students connected with the school.

Copies of the new yearbook are available for \$10 from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402, and also will be sold at government bookstores in many cities.

Members of Congress will have limited free copies for public distribution. USDA has no copies for sale or distribution.

COMPUTERIZED INFORMATION DELIVERY COORDINATOR SAYS SERVICE IS GETTING BETTER

The October issue of INSIDE INFORMATION provided figures comparing USDA's Office of Public Affairs' costs and related figures over the previous two fiscal years for its use of USDA's Computerized Information Delivery Service (CIDS).

The following figures are for the entire USDA, all 16 participating agencies. The figures compare FY 90 with FY 87, the second full year of CID Service operation. "We can't make useful comparisons before FY 87 because we measured loading and accessing of data through CIDS by "reports" rather than 'lines' in FY 86, CIDS' first full fiscal year of operation," says Russell Forte, who coordinates the service for USDA.

The bottom line is that in FY 90, USDA agencies:
—loaded 18.4% more data (2 million lines vs. 1.68 million) than in FY 87,
—got 61.4% more pickup from private industry (6.6 million lines vs. 4.1 million in FY 87),
—got 326% more pickup from federal and state users (3.2 million lines in FY 90 compared to .75 in FY 87),
—and paid 43% LESS money to do it (\$35,315 in FY 90 vs. \$61.765 in FY 87). This is for loading data only. It does not include accessing data.

There are several reasons why the system gets less expensive each year of operation.

- 1) USDA's new contract with Martin Marietta Corporation gives USDA agencies a 70% (rather than 50%) volume discount.
 - 2) USDA agencies loading into CIDS now get a larger rebate—15%—on money private industry subscribers pay to get CIDS information this special electronic way. The previous contract gave USDA only a 10% rebate. That rebate increased 123% by FY 90 over FY 87 (\$17,212 vs. \$7,714).
 - 3) CIDS has more subscribers—almost 80. That's several more than a year ago. That means more people buying access to CIDS information and a bigger rebate to USDA.
 - 4) Probably most important in the long run is the fact that electronics grow cheaper as they become more widely accepted. CIDS will continue to grow less expensive as online communications become more common.
 - 5) CIDS operates on 1985 dollars, which have only 80% of their original purchasing power.
- As USDA entered the second fiscal year (FY 91) of its new contract, the volume discount increased to 73%, the rebate to 16%.

USDA is still in the lead within government in using online distribution of information.

Forte encourages USDA agencies not yet participating to load their information into the service. And, he said state and federal agencies can operate their own CIDS program on the system. The software is paid for. Federal and state agencies using it pay only for what they load into the service and download from it. There are no start-up, monthly minimums, initiation or training fees—it's all taken care of by the contractor.

For further information contact Russell Forte at: 202-447-5505.

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CORNELL UNIVERSITY COOPERATIVE EXTENSION HAS CLIP ART BOOKS FOR SALE

Cornell Cooperative Extension has clip art books available for sale. 'Clip Art Book 3' contains 102 pages of line drawings on subjects such as clothing, employment, finances, food, people, housing, gardening, 4-H, farm animals, farmers, crops, equipment, and scenes. The artwork is offset printed and suited for use in news-letters, flyers, factsheets, and posters. The price is \$24.

Also still available is "Clip Art Book 2," which contains 97 pages of art different from Book 3, but covering the same topics. Discount price is \$16.

To order, send name, address, and check (payable to Cornell University) to: Clip Art Book, Media Services Distribution Center, 7 Business & Technology Park, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY 14850. Telephone is 607-255-2080.

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CALENDAR OF UPCOMING COMMUNICATION EVENTS AND TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

December 5:

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENT COMMUNICATORS ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Rosslyn Westpark Hotel, Arlington, Virginia

Contact: NAGC, 703-823-4821

December 6:

4TH INTERNAT'L MERCURY COMMUNICATIONS AWARDS BANQUET

Grand Hyatt Hotel, New York, New York

Contact: 1-800-634-4020

April 28 - May 1, 1991:

PENN STATE EXTENSION TECHNOLOGY CONFERENCE

Hershey Park, Pennsylvania

Contact: Computer Services, 814-863-3449

June 29 - July 3, 1991:

75TH INTERNAT'L AGRICULTURAL COMMUNICATORS IN EDUCATION CONFERENCE

The Rushmore Plaza, Rapid City, South Dakota

Contact: Emery Tschetter, SD State University, 605-688-4187
